

later spread to the working population, to which hardly any of the arguments apply? Are the middle-class circumstances of the Victorian era representative of the conditions in which similar declines in fertility occurred in other European countries—this seems improbable but certainly deserves investigation?

Although this book relates to a period before modern eugenics began, the investigations described in it are not without significance in relation to eugenic policy. Members will find the author's adventures, which, he emphasizes, are hopeful travels rather than triumphant arrivals, absorbing to follow because of his attractive description of an interesting landscape.

PETER R. COX.

GENETICS

Kallmann, Franz J. *Heredity in Health and Mental Disorder: Principles of Psychiatric Genetics in the light of Comparative Twin Studies.* New York. 1953. Norton. Pp. 315. Price \$ 6.00.

FOR twenty-five years Dr. Kallmann has investigated the inheritance of schizophrenia. From small beginnings, he has built up the department of genetics of the New York State Psychiatric Institute, which is now a well-known research organization. We are told by Dr. Nolan Lewis, who contributes a foreword, that the research now in progress covers thousands of pairs of twins and their families.

This book is noteworthy for the excellence of its illustrations of twins at different stages of their lives. The twin studies are described in the second of the book's three parts which are expansions of three commemorative lectures.

Many readers of this book will stressfully regret that Dr. Kallmann's literary style falls seriously short of the requirements of his interesting and comprehensive material. Indeed, there are many passages which are not only unreadable but scarcely comprehensible. For example, Dr. Kallmann

apparently wishes to tell us that he was led to recognize that prejudices about heredity could impair people's judgments. He expresses this simple and widely shared experience by saying that he was led to "a vague precognition . . . of a peculiar susceptibility of genetic observations to interference by conceptualized sensitivities."

In the first lecture, entitled "Heredity in Relation to Mental Health," and in the third, "Contributions of Genetics to Mental Health Planning," I could find nothing that at the same time had a comprehensible meaning and seemed worth saying. But the photographs of twins which illustrate the second lecture (the book's middle part: it is entitled "Heredity in Relation to Mental Disorder"), and the simply written summaries of the differences between the twins, go far to make up for the literary deficiencies. Of particular interest are the author's observations on suicide and homosexuality among twins. The findings are strikingly different. Of eighteen pairs of uniovular twins of which one twin in each pair had committed suicide, the other twin had done the same in but four of the eighteen pairs. And of these four examples of "concordance," three were regarded as "questionable" for reasons which are not in this book explained. In Dr. Kallmann's words: "Suicide is one of the few phenomena unlikely to occur in both twins even under similar conditions of maladjustment and privation."

Very different are the findings in respect of homosexuality among forty-five male uniovular twins. In forty-four pairs, both the twins were homosexual. There was almost complete concordance. The exception (the discordant pair) is mentioned in a footnote. These thirty-year old twins differed from one another not only in respect of homosexuality but also in that one twin was schizophrenic and alcoholic when the other was normal. Dr. Kallmann adds: "Apart from being fully concordant, more of the one-egg pairs tend to be similar in the role [e.g. active or passive] they take in their sexual activities, as well as in the extent of feminised appearance and behaviour by them."

In this valuable chapter the author gives the findings of his twin studies in respect of psychoneuroses and delinquency, manic-depressive psychosis and schizophrenia (both fully 'discussed'), involuntional psychosis, senile and pre-senile psychoses, epilepsy, certain neurological disorders, and mental deficiency. The interesting observation is made that potential schizophrenics should be discouraged from subjecting themselves to drastic weight-reducing regimes. It seems that attacks may thereby be precipitated.

In view of Dr. Kallmann's undisputed pre-eminence in genetic psychiatry, it is regrettable almost to the point of being tragic that, in his writings, he expresses himself in such a stupefying jargon.

C. P. BLACKER.

Sorsby, A. (Editor). *Clinical Genetics*. London, 1953. Butterworth. Pp. x + 580 + 23. Price 90s.

THERE is undoubtedly a demand for an encyclopaedia of inherited conditions and Professor Sorsby has made a bold attempt to supply one in a single volume. To help him in his task he has enlisted the help of more than thirty contributors from a number of countries. What must have been his first decision was undoubtedly wise. He has not tried to explain the principles of elementary general and human genetics; for these the reader must rely on other works, many of which are available. Instead of an elementary introduction, however, almost inevitably foredoomed to be unsatisfactory, he has hit on a new and excellent plan. The first quarter of the book is devoted to twelve more advanced essays covering just the kind of subjects that should appeal to the medical reader already familiar with the elementary principles of genetics. The essays are very good indeed and give a more general interest to a volume that would otherwise remain largely a work of reference.

The rest of the book deals chapter by chapter with the inherited disorders of the various bodily systems. Some more general material is, however, included, particularly in an excellent chapter by J. M. Tanner on

the inheritance of morphological and physiological traits. If all the host of inherited abnormalities are to be covered in one volume, it is clear that full reviews of the evidence and comprehensive bibliographies are out of the question, as a glance at Cockayne's *Inherited Diseases of the Skin* will show. Such an approach is only possible in a volume dealing with a single system. The most that can be done is to review the evidence much more briefly, expanding where conditions are important, and, more particularly, where the genetics are difficult or obscure. Space can be saved by cutting down where good special books are already available. Much must depend on each contributor's mastery of his subject, for the reader must trust him to provide a balanced summing-up. Those who use the book in connection with genetic prognosis will, however, often want to check the contributor's conclusions by looking at some of the important papers. Others should find it valuable as a starting point to the literature on particular conditions in which they are interested. For both these purposes a carefully selected bibliography of key references is essential. No doubt all these considerations were much in the editor's mind and to a very considerable extent the book, must be judged as successful. There are weaknesses, however. Some chapters are better than others; there is some lack of balance in the allocation of space; contributors occasionally contradict each other. Above all, the bibliographies to the chapters are very uneven; while some are excellent, others are very poor. It is greatly to be hoped that a second edition will soon be demanded, for it should then be possible to profit from the first attempt and make the book not merely good, but very good and useful indeed. It may sound flippant, but it is not so meant, to say that many improvements should be automatically secured now that the contributors have had the chance of reading what their colleagues have written.

The book is very well produced and illustrated and while primarily a work of reference, should have a considerably wider appeal, thanks especially to the happy